Paralysing of operations at Borders

1102. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether operations on the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Burmese border were paralysed for three days in November, 1998;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures taken to ensure non-recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of reply to part (a).

Completion of LCA Project

1103. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two US technology suppliers, M/s. General Electric and M/s. Lockheed Martin have pulled out of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA);

(b) if so, what has been the effect thereof on completion of LCA project;

(c) the present status of the project; and

(d) the details of production plan during the Ninth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Consequent to the imposition of sanctions by the USA in May 1998, the licences given to M/s General Electric and M/s Lockheed Martin for transacting business with India were revoked by the US Government, resulting in discontinuance of cooperation in the specific areas of LCA programme.

(b) A national team has been constituted to overcome the impact of the sanctions on the schedule of LCA. All out efforts are being made to ensure induction of LCA into the Indian Air Force in the year 2003.

(c) The first indigenous LCA technology demonstrator (TD-I) is in advanced stage of qualification testing to ensure safety of flight and will be ready for its first flight by mid-1999. Second LCA (TD-2), which was rolled out in August 1998 is undergoing integration for its first flight targeted in October 1999. Structural assembly of fuselage and wing of first prototype LCA (PV-I) is in progress.

(d) Production plan of LCA has been prepared and is getting ready for approval.

Shelling by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir sector

1104. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of army personnel who either lost their lives or were injured in the past six months on account of shelling by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir sector;

(b) whether the casualties have gone up; and

(c) the counter-militancy drive taken to stop the cross border firing by Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) During the last six months (May to October 1998), 68 Security Personnel were killed and 273 were injured due to unprovoked Pakistani firing on the border in J & K.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Our troops respond appropriately to Pak unprovoked firings, taking due care that the incidents remain localised and no civilian casualty is caused and our response proves punitive and effective.

Alleged encroachment on defence land

1105. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh is in correspondence with

Government regarding defence land in Secunderabad Cantonment and Hyderabad under encroachments;

(b) if so, whether amicable settlement for exchange of the defence land with the State Government on 'land to land' basis has been reached; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per existing Defence Land Policy, transfer of Defence land is based on the principle of "exchange of land at equivalent value" and NOT on "land to land" basis. The State Government was intimated about this fact in September 1997.

Coastal defence

1106. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state the steps taken to enhance coastal defence to cambat antisubversive activities and protect the country's economic interest at sea?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): India Navy Coast Guard carry out regular surveillance and patrol to protect the interest of the country. In this regard, special operations in coordination with other Central and State Government agencies are also carried out. The hardware, equipment and resources of the Navy and the Coast Guard are reviewed and updated from time to time.

Strategy for National Security

1107. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Naval Chief has expressed his apprehensions about the failure at the intelligence level and has called for effective integration of civilian and military strengths in this vital area while evolving a national security strategy, as reported in the Telegraph, dated the 12th October, 1998; and

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take especially in view of prevailing belligerent environment?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) From time to time Government receives assessments from the armed forces and other agencies about more effective gathering and optimal use of intelligence data. Appropriate agencies of the Government analyse such suggestions with a view to furthering the interests of national security.

Budgetary allocations for Indian Armed Forces

1108. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the allocation of funds made in the General Budgets for 1997-98 and 1998-99 for various projects for all the three wings of Indian Armed Forces were adequate;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith amount spent (year-wise), till date;

(c) whether price hike in petroleum and other essential commodities as well as inflation have adversely affected the actual defence expenditure; and

(d) if so, the what extent and the incentives/facilities Government propose to give to soldiers posted at high altitude in Kashmir and China borders?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Allocation on of funds for the Armed Forces is adequate keeping in view the current committed liabilities and prioritised new acquisitions. year-wise expenditure/allocation on capital schemes is as under:

	Rs. in crores
1997-98	7660.40
1998-99 (BE)	8762.36

(c) No Sir.